

# Blank Rome Assembles Team of Leading Attorneys to Open Dallas Office

Dallas – Blank Rome LLP announced today the opening of a new office in Dallas—the firm’s 15th office and second in Texas—with the addition of seven attorneys. Aligning with Blank Rome’s core strengths, the Dallas team is a powerhouse combination of leading corporate, real estate, and finance attorneys with national practices. The new office is located at The Crescent in Uptown.

Joining as partners are:

- Steven R. Block, Dallas Office Co-Chair and Partner, Corporate, M&A, and Securities Group, who joins from Block & McNeill, LLP;
- Jason S. Luter, Dallas Office Co-Chair and Partner, Corporate, M&A, and Securities Group, who joins from Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP;
- Mark W. Harris, Partner, Finance Group, who joins from Alston & Bird LLP;
- Justin G. Mapes, Partner, Real Estate Group, who joins from Locke Lord LLP;
- Christopher M. McNeill, Partner, Corporate, M&A, and Securities Group, who joins from Block & McNeill, LLP; and
- Michael B. Thimmig, Partner, Finance Group, who joins from Alston & Bird LLP.

Also joining is Robert C. Davidson as Associate in the Corporate, M&A, and Securities Group from Block & McNeil, LLP, along with a paralegal and an office coordinator.

“Dallas is a vibrant and thriving business community and we are thrilled to open an office here and bring together such an

outstanding group of attorneys to launch our efforts,” said Grant Palmer, Blank Rome’s Chair and Managing Partner. “Establishing an office in Dallas has been a strategic priority of our firm for some time to better serve our clients who are based in or do business in Dallas and North Texas. We have been committed to entering the market with a team of leading corporate, real estate, and finance attorneys who not only have exceptional experience and reputations locally and nationally, but also fit together as a cohesive and collaborative team. We are excited about Blank Rome’s future in Dallas with our new colleagues and are looking forward to continued growth.”

“There is a remarkable alignment among the six partners who are launching Blank Rome in Dallas,” said Steven Block, Partner and Dallas Office Co-Chair. “Each of us was seeking an opportunity to expand our practices on a national platform with comprehensive service offerings to better serve our clients. And to be able to do this while opening a new office for Blank Rome in a city that we all love is an incredible opportunity. But most importantly, we were all drawn to the quality of our new colleagues throughout the firm. They are great people and top-notch attorneys who are truly committed to the success of their clients and one another. We are looking forward to collaborating with everyone at our new firm.”

“It was clear to all of us that Blank Rome fully understands and appreciates the strategic importance of Dallas to its successful national footprint, and is committed to growing in the market,” added Jason Luter, Partner and Dallas Office Co-Chair. “With so many of the nation’s leading private equity firms, family offices, commercial banks, and consumer credit companies based here, there is strong demand for high-level finance, real estate, and corporate legal counsel. Blank Rome has built an incredible reputation in these areas, and we are excited to work with our colleagues across the firm’s offices,

practices, and industries to support our clients and build the office.”

The Dallas office is Blank Rome’s second location in Texas. The firm established its Houston presence in 2010. Bolstered by combinations with Abrams Scott & Bickley in 2011, Bell Ryniker & Letourneau in 2013, and Wong Cabello in 2015, the office today consists of 40 attorneys covering corporate, litigation, finance and restructuring, intellectual property, maritime, and labor and employment law. Together with Houston, the new Dallas office strengthens and diversifies the firm’s platform in Texas.

“We are very excited to welcome the new Dallas team to the firm,” said Cassandra Mott, Partner and Co-Chair of the Houston office. “They are a tremendous group of attorneys, and their experience aligns with our strengths; reinforces our corporate, finance, and real estate practices both in Texas and nationwide; and complements our strong transactional and litigation teams in Houston. Our expanded strategic presence in Texas further strengthens our capabilities in the state and the service we can provide to our clients locally and throughout the country. We look forward to working with our new colleagues.”

This is the third large group of attorneys to join Blank Rome in as many months. Just since May 1, a group of nine litigators joined the firm’s New York office from Akerman LLP, and a group of nine international trade attorneys and legal professionals joined the Washington, D.C., office from McDermott. Seven additional individual partners have joined the firm since the start of the year.

## **ABOUT THE DALLAS PARTNERS**

## **Steven R. Block, Dallas Office Co-Chair and Partner, Corporate, M&A, and Securities Group**

With more than 40 years of legal experience, Steven Block has an established legacy in practicing corporate and securities law, with an emphasis on mergers and acquisitions, corporate governance, corporate contracts and counseling, licensing, hedge funds, project finance, and private equity. Steve's legal advice is never given in a vacuum. Distinctively, his advice to his clients covers a much broader spectrum than the nuts-and-bolts legal issues, providing pragmatic and experienced guidance tailored to the business of the client. Steve's creativity in finding ways to get a deal done is unparalleled, no matter the obstacles faced. [Read more >>](#)

## **Jason S. Luter, Dallas Office Co-Chair and Partner, Corporate, M&A, and Securities Group**

Jason Luter advises clients on corporate ownership succession planning transactions involving employee stock ownership plans ("ESOPs"), including seller-financed and leveraged and non-leveraged buyouts, and provides ongoing legal counsel to ESOP-owned companies. He represents companies, business owners, financial institutions, and independent fiduciaries in their roles as sellers, lenders, and purchasers in ESOP transactions. His practice includes mergers, acquisitions, and the structuring and financing of ESOPs involving private equity. Jason also advises employers on the design and implementation of executive compensation arrangements that complement the ESOP structure and the culture inherent in an ESOP-owned company. Fortune 500 and privately held companies, independent fiduciaries, private equity groups, middle-market and emerging growth companies, and venture capital companies all turn to Jason for trusted counsel on employee benefit plan

design, deferred compensation plans, cash- and equity-based incentive plans, and severance arrangements. He also advises on tax qualification, error correction, fiduciary responsibility, ESOPs, and employee benefits and executive compensation aspects of corporate transactions, in addition to litigation involving the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (“ERISA”). [Read more >>](#)

## **Mark W. Harris, Partner, Finance Group**

For over 30 years, specialty finance companies, private credit funds, financial institutions, and related service providers have relied on Mark Harris to guide them in structured finance and securitization transactions involving a variety of asset classes, including residential mortgage loans, automobile loans, leases and subscriptions, consumer receivables, timeshare receivables, structured settlements, life settlements, whole businesses and other financial assets. Mark also represents specialty finance borrowers and lenders in connection with warehouse lines of credit, whole loan sales, participations, servicing and derivative transactions, strategic alliances, and corporate governance matters. Mark’s transactional experience also includes mergers and acquisitions and general corporate finance transactions, including representation of issuers and underwriters in public and private offerings of senior/subordinated debt securities and equity securities and representation of borrowers and lenders in secured and unsecured commercial credit facilities. [Read more >>](#)

## **Justin G. Mapes, Partner, Real Estate Group**

Justin Mapes focuses his practice on real estate and commercial transactions with an emphasis on the financing, acquisition, development, management, and disposition of commercial real property, including multifamily properties,

mixed-use developments, retail shopping centers, healthcare and medical office building developments, condominium projects, and hotels. He has represented major financial institutions, specialty lenders, and borrowers in numerous lending transactions, loan workouts, loan modifications, acquisition financing, mezzanine debt, remedy enforcement, and foreclosures involving a wide variety of collateral. Justin routinely guides clients through the material business and legal issues in complex transactions, including commercial leasing, joint venture negotiations, operating agreements, construction contracts, agreements with design professionals, license and management agreements, and franchise agreements. Additionally, Justin has extensive experience advising clients on matters impacting or relating to operations of hotels and resorts in a variety of matters. [Read more >>](#)

## **Christopher M. McNeill, Partner, Corporate, M&A, and Securities Group**

Chris McNeill works with clients in a broad range of industries, including biotechnology, online gaming and social media, software and software as a service ("SAAS") solutions, hospitality and entertainment, private equity, manufacturing, retail and distribution, logistics, construction and related services, and automotive sales and services. He assists clients at all stages of the corporate life cycle, including entity formation, corporate restructuring and expansion, securities financing (including private placements and private equity rounds), traditional commercial debt financing, and mergers and acquisitions. His goal is to get deals done effectively and efficiently, with an emphasis on providing his clients with the information they need to make informed business decisions and a focus on the business practicalities. [Read more >>](#)

## **Michael B. Thimmig, Partner, Finance Group**

Michael Thimmig focuses his practice on structured finance, FinTech, mortgage banking, and secured lending transactions. Recently his practice has focused on structured warehouse credit facilities secured by consumers loans, small balance commercial loans, and merchant cash advances. His securitization transactions have involved various mortgage types including performing, distressed, and nonperforming mortgage loans, and real estate mortgage investment conduit ("REMIC") and non-REMIC securitization structures. He has also been involved in a variety of FinTech bank partnership structures, including representation of FinTech platforms, bank partners, private fund purchasers and credit facility lenders, and various credit products consisting of online consumer loans, small balance commercial loans, merchant cash advances ("MCAs"), and participations in consumer loans. Read more >>

## **About Blank Rome**

Blank Rome is an Am Law 100 firm with 15 offices and more than 680 attorneys and principals who provide comprehensive legal and advocacy services to clients operating in the United States and around the world. Our professionals have built a reputation for their leading knowledge and experience across a spectrum of industries and are recognized for their commitment to pro bono work in their communities. Since our inception in 1946, Blank Rome's culture has been dedicated to providing top-level service to all our clients and has been rooted in the strength of our diversity and inclusion initiatives. For more information, please visit [blankrome.com](http://blankrome.com).

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